

# My Prison

by R. K. Wigal  
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I am on a train,  
In an all-seats car.  
I look around.  
And then I see...  
Her...  
Sitting there,  
In an almost pink sleeveless dress,  
Lustrous dark pony-tailed hair,  
Clear intelligent eyes,  
Pearlescent skin,  
Peaceful countenance,  
Slender,  
Ideal curvature.  
(She is with her mother.)

I approach her, not yet fettered.  
I tell her my name;  
She tells me hers.  
She introduces her mother, whom I greet.  
Mother seems to take to me somewhat...  
Maybe it's the uniform.  
I tell the girl I'm going home on leave.  
She's going to visit her brother;  
Our destinations are similar.  
I am 18.  
She is 15.  
Perfect!  
From Georgia to California,  
On a train,  
The two of us...  
Plenty of time.

We are at instant ease with one another.  
We spend all our time together.  
We sit and talk.  
We flit from car to car...  
Talking...  
Laughing...  
Talking...  
Laughing...  
Talking...  
Of innocuous things.

We are boisterous.

Two middle-aged black ladies  
Scowl at us.  
Could we possibly be annoying them?  
We share with each other our amusement with the fuddy duddies.  
We laugh some more...  
We talk some more...  
Of innocuous things.  
It's too early to talk of more.

Three days pass in three minutes.

I have her phone number.  
I make no moves as yet...  
Not in front of her mother (or so I tell myself).  
Am I being a gentleman?  
...Or is my prison beginning to enclose me?

I phone her.  
I am disappointed to hear  
She is returning to Georgia  
The day after me.  
We chat a bit.  
We say goodbye.

My phone rings.  
It's her.  
She talked to her mother.  
She is returning to Georgia  
The same day as me.  
I am ecstatic.

We are again on a train  
We spend every available moment  
Together,  
Sitting;  
Flitting from car to car,  
Talking...  
Laughing...  
Talking...  
Laughing...  
Talking  
(Always of innocuous things).

Three days again pass in three minutes.

I want to say more...  
I want to do more...  
If only to take her hand...  
To hold her hand...

But I say nothing...  
I do nothing...  
My prison will not allow me;  
My prison has me.

I have her address.  
We correspond.  
It is easier to say things in a letter...  
But my prison's grip is relentless.  
There is no escape.  
Still, I tell her I will visit.  
And I do.

I hitch-hike to her home.  
We sit and talk  
(still of innocuous things).  
We take walks in the woods...  
Together...  
Alone.  
I make no moves.  
I want to hold her hand.  
I do not.  
I want to kiss her.  
I do not.  
My prison envelopes and crushes me;  
It is a straightjacket.  
I cannot breathe!  
The agony!

Again I visit her.  
Again the same.  
And again  
And yet again...  
Four times the same.  
Always the damned same.

My prison suffocates my heart!  
My heart screams to be set free!  
But my heart...  
Free...  
Is not to be.  
She and I are...  
Were...  
Never to be.

It is only my prison for me.